

**Amendments to the Claims**

Please amend Claims 1 and 2. Please add new Claims 22, 23 and 24. The Claim Listing below will replace all prior versions of the claims in the application:

**Claim Listing**

1. (Currently amended) An apparatus for preparing a nucleic acid component of a sample for amplification, comprising:
  - a) a porous support including ~~an agent~~ a deactivating agent that deactivates a nucleic acid amplification inhibitor component of a sample contacting the porous support;
  - b) a housing having an opening and defining an interior, said interior being in fluid communication with the porous support, whereby at least a portion of a fluid directed through the opening is directed through at least a portion of the porous support and separates at least a portion of a nucleic acid component of a sample contacting the porous support from the support, and whereby deactivated components of the nucleic acid amplification inhibitor component are retained by the porous support or are soluble fragments that do not interfere with nucleic acid amplification procedures, thereby preparing the nucleic acid component for amplification; and
  - c) ~~separating means for separating the nucleic acid component~~ a magnetic substrate that separates the sample to be contacted with the porous support from at least a portion of a raw sample and for depositing the nucleic acid component deposits the sample at the porous support ~~which said separating means includes a magnetic substrate.~~
2. (Currently amended) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein said magnetic substrate is included in separating means which further comprise:
  - a) a vessel having an inlet at a first end and an outlet at a second end, distal to said first end;

- b) an ampoule contained within the vessel, said ampoule containing the magnetic substrate, wherein the magnetic substrate includes magnetic beads;
  - c) a valve at the second end of the vessel; and
  - d) a magnet at said valve.
3. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 2, wherein said separating means includes a buffer in said ampoule.
4. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 2, wherein the valve is rotatable, whereby magnetic beads held at one end of the valve can be moved to a second end of the valve and thereby placed into contact with the porous support.
5. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 4, wherein the magnet is removable from the valve, whereby the magnetic beads can be attached to the magnet within the vessel while the valve is in one position, and while the valve is in a second position, the magnet can be removed and the magnetic beads released into contact with the porous support.
6. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 5, further including a removable cap at the first end of the vessel.
7. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 5, wherein the magnet is positioned to attract the magnetic beads in the vessel in an upward direction.
8. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the housing is detachable.
9. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the magnetic substrate is coated with streptavidin.
10. (Withdrawn) A method for preparing a nucleic acid component of a sample for amplification, comprising the steps of:

- a) separating the sample from raw sample components through means that includes a magnetic substrate;
  - b) contacting the sample with a porous support that deactivates a nucleic acid amplification inhibitor component of the sample; and
  - c) directing a fluid through the porous support, whereby the nucleic acid component of the sample is directed through at least a portion of the porous support and is separated from said porous support, thereby preparing the nucleic acid component for amplification.
11. (Withdrawn) The method of Claim 10, wherein the sample is separated from raw sample components by attaching the sample to a magnetic substrate, thereby removing raw sample components.
12. (Withdrawn) The method of Claim 11, wherein the magnetic substrate is in the form of magnetic beads.
13. (Withdrawn) The method of Claim 10, wherein the magnetic substrate is coated with a hydrophobic material.
14. (Withdrawn) The method of Claim 10, wherein the magnetic substrate is coated with a hydrophilic material.
15. (Withdrawn) The method of Claim 10, wherein the magnetic substrate is coated with silicon dioxide.
16. (Withdrawn) The method of Claim 10, wherein the magnetic substrate is coated with streptavidin.
17. (Withdrawn) The method of Claim 10, wherein the magnetic substrate attaches a sample that includes spores, vegetative bacterial cells, DNA or a combination thereof.

18. (Withdrawn) The method of Claim 10, wherein the porous support includes a deactivating agent that deactivates the nucleic acid amplification inhibitor component of the sample, said deactivating agent being a chaotropic salt.
19. (Withdrawn) The method of Claim 10, wherein at least a portion of the raw components are caused to settle by gravity.
20. (Withdrawn) The method of Claim 10, wherein the nucleic acid component is stored in the housing.
21. (Withdrawn) The method of Claim 20, further comprising archiving the nucleic acid component in the housing.
22. (New) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the deactivating agent is a chaotropic agent.
23. (New) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the magnetic substrate is located between the opening and the porous support.
24. (New) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein directing of fluid through the porous support also separates at least a portion of a nucleic acid component of the sample from the nucleic acid amplification inhibitor component retained by the porous support.